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Lady Zaynab in Captivity

Bound with ropes and forced to ride on unsaddled, lean camels, the ladies and orphans of the Prophet's family were taken as captives to Kufa. Their caravan was a horrifying experience; clarions were blown and flags were fluttering. Let us listen to the story from an eyewitness – Muslim, the plasterer, who reports:

While I was plastering doors of the Governorate Mansion of Kufa, sounds of clarions attacked my hearing from every side. "Why is Kufa clamoring?" I asked one of the servants in that mansion. "The head of a mutiny who rebelled against Yazid is now entering the city," answered the servant. "Who is that mutinous?" asked I. "It is al-Husayn ibn Ali," answered the servant.

This answer acted upon me like a thunderbolt. I slapped my face so strongly that I feared on my eyes. As hurriedly as possible, I washed my hands from the plaster and left the mansion. While I stood among people who were waiting for the caravan of the captives and the cut off heads, forty camels carrying women and children appeared.

I saw Ali ibn al-Husayn on a camel without a saddle. Both sides of his neck were bleeding because of chains around it and he was handcuffed. He was weeping and saying, "O evil nation! Curse on you! You have not regarded us in favor of our grandfather. What will you say on the Day of Resurrection when Allah will gather us with the Prophet? As if we have not guided you to the religion, you are now taking us by force on bare-backed camels."[1]

In view of this horrible situation, women of Kufa began to mourn and cry. One of them approached one of the captured ladies and asked, "To whom do you belong?"

The lady answered, "We belong to the Ahl al-Bayt."

As she heard this astounding answer, the Kuffan lady, with the others who were next to her, screamed aloud and hurried to her house to bring any covers that she had and threw out at the captive ladies so that people would not look at them. Another lady brought some food and dates and threw at the captive children who were very hungry. Then Lady Ummu-Kulthum shouted at them, "It is Haram – forbidden –

for us, the Ahl al-Bayt, to have from alms." Hearing this statement, the hungry children threw the food from their hands and even mouths.

Lady Zaynab's First Address

As she saw the crowds blocking all streets of Kufa and surrounding the caravan, Lady Zaynab decided to deliver a speech aiming to unite the public opinion, referring to the grand misfortune that the Umayyad gang brought to the Islamic ummah by killing the actual leader, Imam al-Husayn (a), and charging people of Kufa with that crime, because it was they who breached their promises of supporting the Imam (a) and protecting him. Nevertheless, they – as if it was not they who caused that massacre, mourned for the Imam (a) and wept for the captivity of his harem and children.

Lady Zaynab asked everybody to keep silent. Then she stood calm, composed, and courageous and said:

> الحَمْدُ للهِ، وَالصَّلاةُ عَلَىٰ أَبِي؛ مُحَمَّدٍ، وَآلِهِ الطَّيِّبِينَ الأَخْيَارِ. أَمَّا بَعْدُ يَا أَهْلَ الكُوفَةِ، يَا أَهْلَ الخَتْلِ وَالغَدْرِ، أَتَبْكُونَ؟ فَلا رَقَأَتِ الدَّمْعَةُ وَلا هَدَأَتِ الرَّنَّةُ. إِنَّمَا مَثَلُكُمْ كَمَثَلِ الَّتِي نَقَضَتْ غَزْلَهَا مِنْ بَعْدِ قُوَّةٍ أَنْكَاثاً، تَتَّخِذُونَ أَيْمَانَكُمْ دَخَلاً بَيْنَكُمْ. أَلا وَهَلْ فِيكُمْ إلاّ الصَّلَفُ وَالنَّطَفُ، وَالصَّدْرُ الشَّنِفُ، وَمَلَقُ الإِمَاءِ وَغَمْزُ الأَعْدَاءِ؟ أَوْ كَمَرْعىً عَلَىٰ دِمْنَةٍ، أَوْ كَقِصَّةٍ عَلَىٰ مَلْحُودَةٍ. أَلا سَاءَ مَا قَدَّمَتْ لَكُمْ أَنْفُسُكُمْ أَنْ سَخِطَ اللهُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَفِي العَذَابِ أَنْتُمْ خَالِدُونَ.

All praise is due to Allah. Blessings be upon my father Muhammad (S) and upon his good and righteous progeny (a). Well now do you weep, O people of Kufa – people of deception and perfidy? May your tears never cease, and may the resounding of this calamity never stop. Your similitude is she who unravels her yarn, disintegrating it into pieces after she has spun it strongly. You make your oaths to be means of deceit amongst you. Is there anyone among you who is not one to boast of what he does not have – a charge of debauchery, a conceited liar, a man of grudge without any justification, submissive like bondmaids or feeble before the enemies, just like a pasture in relics or like a dirty piece of cloth on a grave? Truly bad is that which your souls have committed. You have reaped the Wrath of Allah, remaining in the chastisement for eternity.

> أَتَبْكُونَ وَتَنْتَحِبُونَ؟ إِي وَاللهِ! فَابْكُوا كَثِيراً وَاضْحَكُوا قَلِيلاً، فَلَقَدْ ذَهَبْتُمْ بِعَارِهَا وَشَنَآنِهَا (وَشَنَارِهَا). وَلَنْ تَرْحَضُوهَا بِغَسْلٍ بَعْدَهَا أَبَداً. وَأَنَّىٰ تَرْحَضُونَ قَتْلَ سَلِيلِ خَاتَمِ الأَنْبِيَاءِ، وَمَعْدِنِ الرِّسَالَةِ، وَسَيِّدِ شَبَابِ أَهْلِ الجَنَّةِ، وَمَلاذِ خِيَرَتِكُمْ، وَمَفْزَعِ نَازِلَتِكُمْ، وَمَنَارِ حُجَّتِكُمْ، وَمِدْرَةِ سُنَّتِكُمْ؟ أَلا سَاءَ مَا تَزِرُونَ، وَبُعْداً لَكُمْ وَسُحْقاً، فَلَقَدْ خَابَ السَّعْيُ وَتَبَّتِ الأَيْدِي، وَخَسِرَتِ الصَّفْقَةُ، وَبُؤْتُمْ بِغَضَبٍ مِنَ اللهِ وَرَسُولِهِ، وَضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ الذِّلَّةُ وَالمَسْكَنَةُ.

Do you really cry and sob? By Allah, you should then cry a great deal and laugh very little, for you have earned nothing but shame and infamy, and you shall never be able to wash it away. How could you do so? The descendant of the bearer of the Last Message, the very essence of the Message, master of the

youths of Paradise, the refuge of the righteous from among you, the one who saves you from calamity, the beacon of your guidance, and the keeper of your traditions has been killed. O how horrible is the sin that you bear! May you be distanced and crushed. The effort is rendered futile, perdition overtakes the hands, the deal is lost, and you earned nothing but wrath from Allah and His Messenger. You are doomed with servitude and humiliation.

وَيْلَكُمْ يَا أَهْلَ الكُوفَةِ! أَتَدْرُونَ أَيَّ كَبِدٍ لِرَسُولِ اللهِ فَرَيْتُمْ؟ وَأَيَّ كَرِيمَةٍ لَهُ أَبْرَزْتُمْ؟ وَأَيَّ دَمٍ لَهُ سَفَكْتُمْ؟ وَأَيَّ حُرْمَةٍ لَهُ انْتَهَكْتُمْ؟ لَقَدْ جِئْتُمْ شَيْئاً إِدّاً تَكَادُ السَّمَاوَاتُ يَتَفَطَّرْنَ مِنْهُ وَتَنْشَقُّ الأَرْضُ وَتَخِرُّ الجِبَالُ هَدّاً. بِهَا صَلْعَاءَ عَنْقَاءَ سَوْدَاءَ فَقْمَاءَ (خَرْقَاءَ شَوْهَاءَ كَطِلاعِ الأَرْضِ وَمِلاءِ السَّمَاءِ). أَفَعَجِبْتُمْ أَنْ مَطَرَتِ السَّمَاءُ دَماً؟ وَلَعَذَابُ الآخِرَةِ أَخْزَىٰ وَأَنْتُمْ لا تُنْصَرُونَ. فَلا يَسْتَخِفَّنَّكُمُ المَهْلُ، فَإِنَّهُ لا يَحْفُزُهُ البِدَارُ وَلا يَخَافُ فَوْتَ الثَّأْرِ، وَإِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ لَبِالْمِرْصَادِ.

Woe unto you, O people of Kufa! Do you know whose heart you have burned, what a feat you have labored for, what blood you have shed, and what sanctity you have violated? You have done a most monstrous deed, something for which the heavens are about to split asunder and so is the earth, and for which the mountains crumble. You have done something most uncanny, most defaced, duskiest, most horrible, as much as the fill of the earth and of the sky. Do you wonder why the sky rains blood? Surely, the torment of the Hereafter is a greater chastisement, and you shall not be helped. Let no respite elate you, for rushing does not speed it up, nor does it fear the loss of the opportunity for revenge. You Lord is waiting in ambush to do so.

Because he recognized that the situation there could no longer stand the impact of the words of his aunt, Imam Zayn al-Abidin interrupted her speech, saying, “That is enough, Aunt. Thanks to Allah, you are a learned lady whom none has taught, and you can comprehend without being made to do so.”

Echo of the speech

Lady Zaynab’s eloquent speech, which is compared to Imam Ali’s speeches, rebuked people of Kufa so effectively, exposed their false faith in Islam, falsified their deceitful tears and introduced them as the most ignoble criminals as they contributed strongly in the murder of killing Imam al-Husayn (a), his household, and his companions.

With the utterance of justice and honesty and the voice of courage and right, Lady Zaynab hit people of Kufa and pointed to their lowliness and rotten-heartedness. Their forgery and falsehood could not deceive her as she reproached them for their crimes and ascribed to them the meanest characters. Moreover, she commented on their weeping by saying that they should have wept for the big crime of disappointing the Imam and letting him down.

Furthermore, this speech made them amazed and perplexed. They put their hands on their mouths without knowing what to do. An old man, for instance, approached her with tears in his eyes, to say, “My father and mother be sacrificed for you. Your men are the best men, your youths are the best youths,

your women are the best women, and your progeny will never die away or become low."[2]

Then, Lady Fatimah, daughter of Imam al-Husayn (a), delivered an eloquent speech similar to her aunt's. Because her words were so strong and had bearings on them, people of Kufa begged her to stop. She responded, but people could not stop their wailing and weeping.

Then, Lady Ummu-Kulthum spoke similar words that touched people so deeply that women began to slap their faces and men to weep incessantly.

Then, Imam Zayn al-Abidin spoke. He proved they were not true Muslims and that they had a share in the crime of killing the Imam (a). They therefore said to each other, "We have certainly perished." They then asked him to stop, and he did as their cries and wailings rose.

Before the governor

Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad, son of the ill-famed Marjanah, was sitting on his throne in the Governorate Mansion when the captive ladies and children of the Prophet's family were presented before him. They were living their horrible hours in humility of captivity and under the swords of those miscreants who were there to congratulate him for his triumph and narrate to him their crimes in Karbala, while he listened arrogantly and joyfully. With a baton he had in the hand, Ubaydullah was whacking the holy head of Imam al-Husayn (a) and expressing his gloating over him by saying, "I have never seen such a face."

Before he had finished his malicious statement, Anas ibn Malik, the companion of the Holy Prophet (S), said to him, "Yes, he looks like the Prophet." This statement silenced Ubaydullah who could not find a word to answer.

After he had quenched his wicked, thirsty soul from insulting the Prophet's family, Ubaydullah turned his face towards the captives. There was a lady trying to hide herself in a corner. Dignity and sublimity were very clearly drawn on her features despite the simple clothes she wore. As soon as his eyes fell on her, he asked, "Who is that lady taking the remotest corner of this session."

The lady did not answer because she despised him. He repeated his question more than once until one of the ladies answered, "This is Zaynab, daughter of Fatimah, daughter of the Messenger of Allah (a)." He therefore tried to show his gloating over her misfortunes by saying, "Thanks Allah Who unmasked, killed, and belied your revolution."

In the likeness of her courageous father and brothers, Lady Zaynab replied to him:

> اَلحَمْدُ للهِ ٱلَّذِي أَكْرَمَنَا بِنَبِيِّهِ، وَطَهَّرَنَا مِنَ ٱلرِّجْسِ تَطْهِيراً. إِنَّمَا يُفْتَضَحُ ٱلْفَاسِقُ وَيُكَذَّبُ ٱلْفَاجِرُ، وَهُوَ غَيْرُنَا، وَهُوَ غَيْرُنَا يَا بْنَ مَرْجَانَةَ...

“Thanks to Allah Who honored us with His Prophet and purified us from uncleanness thoroughly. It is only the lewd who is unmasked, and it is only the dissolute who has been belied. We are not any of these two. Indeed, we are not any of these two, son of Marjanah!”

As he received these shocking words, Ubaydullah had nothing to say. He therefore spoke a word to inflict pain as an attempt to cover up his failure and inability to answer her. He asked her, “How do you see that which Allah has done to your brother?”

Bravely and steadfastly, Lady Zaynab answered with words of triumph:

مَا رَأَيْتُ إِلاّ جَمِيلاً. هٰؤُلاَءِ قَوْمٌ كَتَبَ ٱللهُ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْقَتْلَ فَبَرَزُوا إِلىٰ مَضَاجِعِهِمْ، وَسَيَجْمَعُ ٱللهُ بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُمْ فَتُحَاجَّ وَتُخَاصَمَ. فَانْظُرْ لِمَنِ ٱلْفَلَجُ يَوْمَئِذٍ. ثَكَلَتْكَ أُمُّكَ يَا بْنَ مَرْجَانَةَ.

“It was nothing but good. Those were peoples whom Allah knew they would be killed. They therefore came to the places where they would be slain. Allah will gather you with them for judgment and sentence. See, who will be the triumphant on that day. Woe shall be you, son of Marjanah, then.”

These words of reproach and despise made the illegitimate governor lose his temper to a degree that he stood up to strike Lady Zaynab, but Amr ibn Hurayth warned him against doing so, saying, “She is only a woman, and women’s words should not be considered.”

Nevertheless, Ubaydullah returned to gloat at the misfortunes of the Ahl al-Bayt by addressing Lady Zaynab, “At least, Allah has cured my heart and inflicted me upon your tyrant master and the disobedient rebels of your family members.”

These words filled Lady Zaynab’s heart with sorrow and grief as she recollected the images of her protectors. Hence, she said to him:

لَعَمْرِي لَقَدْ قَتَلْتَ كَهْلِي وَقَطَعْتَ فَرْعِي وَاجْتَثَثْتَ أَصْلِي. فَإِنْ كَانَ هٰذَا شِفَاؤُكَ فَقَدِ اشْتَفَيْتَ.

“I swear by my life, you have killed my protectors, pulled out my branches, and uprooted my roots. So, if this heals your heart, then you are indeed healed.”

Out of his uncontrollable rage, Ubaydullah said, “This one is a rhymist. Her father was rhymist and poet. I swear it.”

Lady Zaynab answered, “I am too engaged to use rhyme. Women have nothing to do with rhyme.”

As he found nothing to say, Ubaydullah turned his face towards Imam Zayn al-Abidin (a) and asked, “Who are you?”

“I am Ali son of al-Husayn,” answered the Imam (a).

“But Allah has killed Ali ibn al-Husayn,” shouted the filthy criminal.

“I had a brother called ‘Ali, too. You have killed him, and on the Day of Resurrection, you will be interrogated about this,” replied the Imam (a) with composure.

“No, it was Allah who killed him,” barked ‘Ubaydullah furiously.

Imam Zayn al-Abidin (a) answered with words of Almighty Allah:

“Allah takes the souls at the time of their death. (39:42)”

“And a soul will not die but with the permission of Allah the term is fixed. (3:145)”

This answer bewildered the tyrant who did not expect to hear such strong evidence extracted from the Holy Quran, because he forgot that the holy Quran was revealed in the houses of those individuals and the one to whom the holy Quran was revealed is their grandfather and origin. Hence, he showed his arrogance saying, “How dare you answer my words? How dare you refute my saying?” He then ordered one of his headmen to cut off Imam Zayn al-’ªbidin’s head. But Lady Zaynab hurried to embrace her nephew and address ‘Ubaydullah, “Son of Ziyad, suffices you what you have shed of our blood. Have you really spared anyone other than this? If you want to kill him, kill me with him as well.”

Ubaydullah was amazed by such situation of heroism and altruism. He therefore ordered, “Leave him for her. How strong the tie of kinship is! She wanted to be killed with him.”

Thanks to Lady Zaynab, Imam Zayn al-Abidin (a) was saved from that tyrant.

In a chamber lying next to the Kufa Masjid, the captive harem and children of the Prophet’s family were detained and mistreated. Each one of them received a single loaf of bread for a whole day, and Lady Zaynab, however, used to distribute her share among the children and abstain from food for the whole day until feebleness attacked her notably to the degree that she could no longer stand up for prayer. Noticing this, Imam Zayn al-’ªbidin expressed his panic to his aunt who had to tell him the reason.

In view of Lady Zaynab’s remarkable reputation throughout the Islamic state, the ladies of Kufa competed with each other in having the honor of visiting her, but she refused completely to receive anyone, declaring, “None should ever visit us except bondmaidens, for they have been captured, and so have we been.”

The ruling authorities were waiting for the orders of the tyrant Yazid regarding the captives, and a few days later, they received his orders of sending them to Damascus.

With the caravan of the captives, the holy heads of the martyrs were carried on spearheads so that, like people of Kufa, people of Syria would see them, and this would gladden the tyrant.

The Captives in Damascus

Tied up with ropes, forced to ride saddleless, lean camels, and being in the utmost state of humiliation, the harem and children of the Prophet's family were taken to Syria. Throughout their journey, they did not say a single word and did not ask anything from the drivers of their caravan. Being close to Syria, the caravan stopped so that enough time would be given to adorn the city with manifestations of festivity and to gather people to witness this false victory of their ruler.

The caravan was about four parasangs[3] away from Syria when its people received them with joy, carrying drums and trumpets, and wearing their best dresses—all this was for showing their delight for the massacre of the Prophet's family.

Let us listen to the scene as described by an eyewitness:

Sahl ibn Saad al-Saidi narrated:

Intending to visit Jerusalem, I passed by Damascus, but it was different—the city was exaggeratedly adorned with colorful gilding, its people were highly joyful, and their women were playing tambourines and drums. I thought that people of Damascus had a festivity that we did not have. Noticing some people talking secretly, I approached them and asked, "Do you, people of Syria, celebrate a festivity that we do not know?"

"It seems that you are a stranger, are you not?" asked they.

"Yes, it is. I, Sahl ibn Saad, am one of those who met the Messenger of Allah," answered I.

They said, "Sahl, do you not think that it is very strange that the heavens are not raining blood and the earth is not sinking with its inhabitants?"

"What for is that?" asked I.

"All these are expecting the arrival of al-Husayn's (cut off) head from Kufa," they revealed.

"How strange this is! The head of al-Husayn is being marched here while people are cheering in crowds! From which gate will the head enter the city?" asked I.

As they pointed at the Gate of al-Saat, I hurried there. A queue of banners began to enter, but my eyes fell on a horseman who had in the hand a banner without a spearhead on which lied a head most similar to that of the Holy Prophet. That was the head of al-Husayn! The captives appeared next on unsaddled, lean camels. As I reached one of the captive ladies, I asked about her identity.

"I am Sukaynah daughter of al-Husayn," she replied.

“And I am Sahl, the companion of your grandfather the Messenger of Allah, ask for anything and I will do it for you,” I offered.

With grief, she asked, “Ask the bearer of al-Husayn’s head to precede us for a considerable distance so that people will look at the head instead of looking at us — the family of the Messenger of Allah.”

So, I ran towards that horseman, bribed him with four hundred dirhams, and asked him to hurry forward away from the captive ladies, and he did.

In that situation too, an old Syrian man leaning on a cane who was gloating at the humility of those captives, approached Imam Ali Zayn al-Abidin (a) and said in inflicting manner, “Praise be to Allah who eradicated you and empowered the emir to triumph over you.”

Out of his keenness and perspicacity, the Imam (a) noticed that the old man was deceived by the wrong rumors that the ruling authorities spread against the Ahl al-Bayt (a). He therefore asked, “Old man, have you recited the Holy Quran?”

This statement shocked the old man who wondered and, thus, answered affirmatively.

The Imam (a) then asked him whether he had seen the following Quranic Verses:

قُلْ لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا إِلَّا الْمَوَدَّةَ فِي الْقُرْبَىٰ

“Say: I do not ask of you any reward for it but love for my near relatives. (***42:23***)***”***

وَآتِ ذَا الْقُرْبَىٰ حَقَّهُ

“***And give to the near relatives his due.*** (***17:26***)***”***

...وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا غَنِمْتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَأَنَّ لِلَّهِ خُمُسَهُ وَلِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ

“And know that whatever thing you gain, a fifth of it is for Allah and for the Messenger and for the near relatives. (***8:41***)***”***

Amazed, the old man answered that he had recited these Verse.

The Imam (a) thus declared, “Only it is we who are the intended in Allah’s remark – ‘the near relatives’– in these Verses.”

Furthermore, the Imam (a) asked the old man whether he had recited Allah’s saying:

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا

"Allah only desires to keep away the uncleanness from you, O people of the House! and to purify you a with a (thorough) purifying. (33:33)"

With astonishment, the old man answered that he had recited this Verse, too.

The Imam (a) hence said, "Only it is we who are the 'People of the House' whom Almighty Allah has purified thoroughly."

This fact changed the old man completely and made him feel sorry for the days on which he could not discern the reality of the Umayyad rulers and their authorities. Even his tongue was tied up by the new fact; he therefore said to the Imam falteringly, "Please, tell me by Allah! Is it truly you who are those ones?"

"Yes, it is. I swear it by our grandfather, the Messenger of Allah (S)," replied the Imam (a) confidently.

Feeling sorry for the words that he initially showered at the Imam (a), the old man threw himself on the hands of the Imam (a) to kiss them heavily as signs of remorse, declaring, "I disavow those who killed you."

Yazid's gloating

Yazid, the cursed, was sinking in waves of joy and desire to wreak as he came to know about the arrival of the captives' caravan. Shimr ibn Dhil-Jawshan and Makhfar ibn Thalabah presented the head of Imam al-Husayn (a) to him, and he permitted all lowly people of Damascus to gather at his palace and congratulate him for this 'false' triumph and revenge over the Prophet and his family (a).

The holy head was placed before the tyrant who went on hitting it with a stick he had in the hand. He then began to say statements showing his unlimited malice towards the Imam, his people, and the Divine Message that the Holy Prophet (S) conveyed to humankind—the message that humiliated Yazid and his people since they had stopped against it, sparing no single effort.

Abi Barazah al-Aslami, seeing this despicable scene, could not control himself; so he addressed Yazid, "How dare you hit at the mouth of al-Husayn with your stick? I swear I have seen the Holy Prophet (S) kiss this mouth so frequently. However, on the Day of Resurrection, Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad will be your interceder, while the interceder of al-Husayn (a) will be Muhammad (S)."[4]

The filthy policemen of Yazid had tied all the captives in one rope beginning with the neck of Imam Zayn al-Abidin, to Lady Zaynab's, up to the last child. They forced them to walk in such a manner, and whenever any of them would stumble, the guards would whip them heavily. Moreover, they were surrounded with cries of triumph.

With this humiliation, the captives were placed before the court of tyrant Yazid. Imam Zayn al-Abidin looked at the tyrant and said, “What if the Messenger of Allah sees us in such a manner? What will be his impression?”

These words affected everybody, including the tyrant himself, and thus the attendants wept. As he turned his face towards the captive harem of the Prophet’s family, Yazid said, “Woe to son of Marjanah! If you related this to him at any time, he would not do this to you.”

This was completely untrue, because son of Marjanah would not have done anything unless he had the orders and instructions of Yazid – the tyrant.

He then turned his face towards Imam Zayn al-Abidin and said, “Well, Ali ibn al-Husayn! Because your father disregarded my kinship with him, ignored my right, and attempted to seize my authority, Allah did this to him.”

The Imam’s answer to this false claim was a statement from the Holy Quran — the words of Almighty Allah:

. مَا أَصَابَ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ نَبْرَأَهَا ۚ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ

. لِكَيْلَا تَأْسَوْا عَلَىٰ مَا فَاتَكُمْ وَلَا تَفْرَحُوا بِمَا آتَاكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ

“No evil befalls on the earth nor in your own souls, but it is in a book before We bring it into existence; surely, that is easy to Allah. So that you may not grieve for what has escaped you, nor be exultant at what He has given you; and Allah does not love any arrogant boaster.” (***57:22-3***)

This answer enraged Yazid who tried to find a suitable reply and, hence, he recited another Quranic Verse:

. كَثِيرٍ عَنْ وَيَعْفُو أَيْدِيكُمْ كَسَبَتْ فَبِمَا مُصِيبَةٍ مِنْ أَصَابَكُمْ وَمَا

“And whatever affliction befalls you, it is on account of what your hands have wrought, and (***yet***) ***He pardons most*** (***of your faults***)***.”*** (***42:30***)

Imam Zayn al-Abidin, the most knowledgeable of the Holy Quran, said, “This Verse concerns only those who wrong others, and does not concern those whom are wronged.”[5]

Lady Zaynab's Second Address

Yazid showed great rejoicing at the situation in which the family of the Prophet were held as his captive and heads of the Prophet's grandsons were thrown between his hands and the. When he recollected these bitter days of his father and grandfather who led campaigns against al-Husayn's grandfather and the failure that chased them even in their own homes, He then quoted poetic verses said during the Battle of Uhud, with suitable changes, saying:

I wish my forefathers at Badr[6] had witnessed

How the Khazraj[7] are annoyed by the thorns,

They would have been very much delighted,

Then they'd have said, "May your hands, O Yazid, never be paralyzed

We have killed the masters of their chiefs

And equated it with Badr, and it has been so, indeed

The Hashemites played with the dominion so indeed,

While no news from the Heaven had come

Nor was there anything revealed[8]

I will disavow the Khandaf if I will not seek revenge

From Ahmed's[9] children for what he did to us!

Reacting to these verses, Lady Zaynab uprose against the tyrant and said:

اَلحَمْدُ للهِ رَبِّ العَالمَينَ، وَصَلَّى اللهُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ. صَدَقَ اللهُ سُبْحَانَهُ، كَذَلِكَ يَقُولُ:

أَسَاؤُا الَّذِينَ عَاقِبَةَ كَانَ ثُمَّ السُّوأَى أَنْ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَكَانُوا بِهَا يَسْتَهْزِئُونَ

أَظَنَنْتَ يَا يَزِيدُ، حَيْثُ أَخَذْتَ عَلَيْنَا أَقْطَارَ الأَرْضِ وَآفَاقَ السَّمَاءِ فَأَصْبَحْنَا نُسَاقُ كَمَا تُسَاقُ الإِمَاءِ، أَنَّ بِنَا عَلَى اللهِ هَوَاناً وَبِكَ عَلَيْهِ كَرَامَةً! وَأَنَّ ذَلِكَ لِعِظَمِ خَطَرِكَ عِنْدَهُ؟ فَشَمَخْتَ بِأَنْفِكَ وَنَظَرْتَ فِي عَطْفِكَ جَذْلانَ مَسْرُوراً، حِينَ رَأَيْتَ الدُّنْيَا لَكَ مُسْتَوْسِقَةً وَالأُمُورَ مُتَّسِقَةً، وَحِينَ صَفَا لَكَ مُلْكُنَا وَسُلْطَانُنَا؟

All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the Worlds. Allah's blessings be upon His Messenger Muhammad and

his entire progeny. True are the words of Allah Who says,

***"Then the end of those who committed evil was that they disbelieved in Allah's Signs and they were ridiculing them.* (*30: 10*)"**

Do you, Yazid, think that —when you blocked all the avenues of the earth and the horizons of the heavens before us, so we were driven as captives— that we are worthless in the sight of Allah and that you are respectful in His eyes? Or is it because you enjoy with Him a great status? So, you look down at us and become arrogant, elated, when you see the world submissive to you and things are done as you want them, and when our authority and power became all yours?

فَمَهْلاً مَهْلاً، أَنَسِيتَ قَوْلَ اللهِ تَعَالَى:

مُهِينٌ عَذَابٌ وَلَهُمْ ۚ إِثْمًا لِيَزْدَادُوا لَهُمْ نُمْلِي إِنَّمَا ۖ لِأَنْفُسِهِمْ خَيْرٌ لَهُمْ نُمْلِي أَنَّمَا كَفَرُوا الَّذِينَ يَحْسَبَنَّ وَلَا

أَمِنَ العَدْلِ، يَا ابْنَ الطُّلَقَاءِ، تَخْدِيرُكَ حَرَائِرَكَ وَإِمَائَكَ، وَسَوْقُكَ بَنَاتِ رَسُولِ اللهِ، صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ، سَبَايَا؛ قَدْ هَتَكْتَ سُتُورَهُنَّ وَأَبْدَيْتَ وُجُوهَهُنَّ، تَحْدُو بِهِنَّ الأَعْدَاءُ مِنْ بَلَدٍ إِلَى بَلَدٍ، وَيَسْتَشْرِفُهُنَّ أَهْلُ المَنَاهِلِ وَالمَعَاقِلِ، وَيَتَصَفَّحُ وُجُوهَهُنَّ القَرِيبُ وَالبَعِيدُ وَالدَّنِيُّ وَالشَّرِيفُ، لَيْسَ مَعَهُنَّ مِنْ رِجَالِهِنَّ وَلِيٌّ وَلا مِنْ حُمَاتِهِنَّ حَمِيٌّ؟

But wait! Have you forgotten that Allah has said,

***"Do not regard those who disbelieved that we grant them good for themselves? We only give them a respite so that they may increase their sins, and for them there is a humiliating torment.* (*3: 178*)"**

Is it fair, O son of the 'Released ones', that you keep your ladies and bondmaidens in their chambers (under protection), and at the same time you drive the daughters of the Messenger of Allah as captives with them exposed and faces unveiled, taken from one land to another by their enemies, being seen by those at the watering places as well as the men stationed at your forts, their being faces exposed to be eyed by everyone—near or distant, lowly or honorable, when none of their men are with them nor are any of their protectors?

وَكَيْفَ تُرْتَجَى مُرَاقَبَةُ مَنْ لَفَظَ فُوهُ أَكْبَادَ الأَزْكِيَاءِ، وَنَبَتَ لَحْمُهُ مِنْ دِمَاءِ الشُّهَدَاءِ؟ وَكَيْفَ لا يَسْتَبْطِئُ فِي بُغْضِنَا أَهْلَ البَيْتِ مَنْ نَظَرَ إِلَيْنَا بِالشَّنَفِ وَالشَّنَآنِ وَالإِحَنِ وَالأَضْغَانِ؟ ثُمَّ تَقُولُ غَيْرَ مُتَأَثِّمٍ وَلا مُسْتَعْظِمٍ:

لَأَهَلُّوا وَاسْتَهَلُّوا فَرَحاً ثُمَّ قَالُوا يَا يَزِيدُ لا تُشَلْ

مُنْتَحِياً عَلَى ثَنَايَا أَبِي عَبْدِاللهِ، عَلَيْهِ السَّلامُ، سَيِّدِ شَبَابِ أَهْلِ الجَنَّةِ تَنْكُتُهَا بِمِخْصَرَتِكَ؟ وَكَيْفَ لا تَقُولُ ذَلِكَ وَقَدْ نَكَأْتَ القَرْحَةَ وَاسْتَأْصَلْتَ الشَّأْفَةَ بِإِرَاقَتِكَ دِمَاءَ ذُرِّيَّةِ مُحَمَّدٍ، صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ، وَنُجُومِ الأَرْضِ مِنْ آلِ عَبْدِالمُطَّلِبِ، وَتَهْتِفُ بِأَشْيَاخِكَ، وَزَعَمْتَ أَنَّكَ تُنَادِيهِمْ. فَلَتِرِدَنَّ وَشِيكاً مَوْرِدَهُمْ وَلَتَوَدَّنَّ أَنَّكَ شُلِلْتَ وَبُكِمْتَ وَلَمْ تَكُنْ قُلْتَ مَا قُلْتَ وَفَعَلْتَ مَا فَعَلْتَ.

But what can be expected from one who has descended from those whose mouths chewed the livers of the purified ones and whose flesh grows out of the blood of the martyrs? How can it be expected from the one who has looked at us — the Ahl al-Bayt with nothing other than grudge and animosity and with despise and malice, would not hate us? So without remorse or feeling its gravity, you say -

"They would have been very much delighted,
Then they'd have said, "May your hands, O Yazid, never be paralyzed!"

How dare you hit the lips of Abu Abdullah (a), the Master of the Youths of Paradise? But what else can you do, since you have stirred a wound that had almost healed and since all mercy has been removed from your heart, after having shed the blood of the offspring of Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him and his Progeny who are the stars on this earth from among the family of Abdul-Muttalib? Then you cite your mentors as if you speak to them. Soon shall you be lodged with them and soon shall you wish that you were paralyzed and muted and did not say what you said nor did what you did.

اَللَّهُمَّ خُذْ لَنَا بِحَقِّنَا وَانْتَقِمْ مِمَّنْ ظَلَمَنَا وَاحْلُلْ غَضَبَكَ بِمَنْ سَفَكَ دِمَائَنَا وَقَتَلَ حُمَاتَنَا. فَوَاللهِ مَا فَرَيْتَ إلاّ جِلْدَكَ وَلا حَزَزْتَ إلاّ لَحْمَكَ. وَلَتَرِدَنَّ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللهِ، صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ، بِمَا تَحَمَّلْتَ مِنْ سَفْكِ دِمَاءِ ذُرِّيَّتِهِ وَانْتَهَكْتَ مِنْ حُرْمَتِهِ فِي عِتْرَتِهِ وَلُحْمَتِهِ، وَحَيْثُ يَجْمَعُ اللهُ شَمْلَهُمْ وَيَلُمُّ شَعَثَهُمْ وَيَأْخُذُ بِحَقِّهِمْ:

يُرْزَقُونَ رَبِّهِمْ عِنْدَ أَحْيَاءٌ بَلْ ۚ أَمْوَاتًا اللَّهِ سَبِيلِ فِي قُتِلُوا الَّذِينَ تَحْسَبَنَّ وَلَا.

وَحَسْبُكَ بِاللهِ حَاكِماً وَبِمُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ خَصِيماً وَبِجَبْرَائِيلَ ظَهِيراً. وَسَيَعْلَمُ مَنْ سَوَّلَ لَكَ وَمَكَّنَكَ مِنْ رِقَابِ المُسْلِمِينَ، بِئْسَ لِلظَّالِمِينَ بَدَلاً وَأَيُّكُمْ شَرٌّ مَكَاناً وَأَضْعَفُ جُنْداً.

O Allah, take what belongs to us out of his hands, seek revenge against all those who oppressed us, and let Your wrath descend upon whoever shed our blood and killed our protectors! By Allah, you have burnt only your own skin, you have cut only your own flesh, and you shall come face to face with the Messenger of Allah, peace of Allah be upon him and his progeny, bearing the burdens of the blood which you have shed, the blood of his offspring, and of his sanctities which you violated, when Allah

gathers them together and seeks equity on their behalf.

***"And do not reckon those who are slain in the way of Allah as dead. Nay! They are living with their Lord, receiving their sustenance.* (*3:169*)"**

It is quite sufficient that Allah is your Judge and Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him and his progeny, is your opponent, and (Archangel) Gabriel as the supporter (of Muhammad). All those who instigated you to do what you did and all those who put you in charge due to which you are playing havoc with the lives of the Muslims will know for certain how evil the end of the oppressors is and which of you shall have the worst place and will be the least protected?

وَلَئِنْ جَرَتْ عَلَيَّ الدَّوَاهِي مُخَاطَبَتَكَ، إِنّي لَأَسْتَصْغِرُ قَدْرَكَ وَأَسْتَعْظِمُ تَقْرِيعَكَ وَأَسْتَكْثِرُ تَوْبِيخَكَ، لَكِنِ العُيُونُ عَبْرَى وَالصُّدُورُ حَرَّى. اَلا فَالعَجَبُ كُلُّ الْعَجَبِ لِقَتْلِ حِزْبِ اللهِ النُّجَبَاءِ بِحِزْبِ الشَّيْطَانِ الطُّلَقَاءِ! فَهَذِهِ الأَيْدِي تَنْطِفُ مِنْ دِمَائِنَا وَالأَفْوَاهُ تَتَحَلَّبُ مِنْ لُحُومِنَا وَتِلْكَ الجُثَثُ الطَّوَاهِرُ الزَّوَاكِي تَنْتَابُهَا العَوَاسِلُ وَتُعَفِّرُهَا أُمَّهَاتُ الفَرَاعِلِ. وَلَئِنِ اتَّخَذْتَنَا مَغْنَماً لَتَجِدُنَا وَشِيكاً مُغْرَماً حِينَ لا تَجِدُ اِلاّ مَا قَدَّمَتْ يَدَاكَ،

لِلْعَبِيدِ بِظَلَّامٍ رَبُّكَ وَمَا ۟فَعَلَيْهَا سَاءَأَ وَمَنْ۟ فَلِنَفْسِهِ صَالِحًا عَمِلَ مَن.

فَإِلَى اللهِ المُشْتَكَى وَعَلَيْهِ المُعَوَّلُ.

Although calamities have forced me to speak to you, Indeed your reach is trivial in my eyes and I find your talk big and I regard your berating excessive, and the eyes are tearful, and the chests are on fire. The surprise of all surprises is that those who are "Party to Shaitan" have murdered those who are the 'Ones near to Allah'. Such hands are dripping with our blood; such mouths are feeding on our flesh, while those who are pure and sacred – their corpses have been offered as food to the wild beasts of the desert and have been desecrated by the brutes. If you regard us as your booty, you shall soon deem us as your opponents—that will be when you find nothing but what your hands had committed,

***"And your Lord never treats His servants unjustly.* (*41:46*)"**

To Allah is my complaint, and upon Him do I rely.

فَكِدْ كَيْدَكَ وَاسْعَ سَعْيَكَ وَنَاصِبْ جَهْدَكَ! فَوَاللهِ لا تَمْحُوَنَّ ذِكْرَنَا وَلا تُمِيتُ وَحْيَنَا وَلا تُدْرِكُ أَمَدَنَا وَلا تَرْخَصُ عَنْكَ عَارَهَا. وَهَلْ رَأْيُكَ إِلاّ فَنَدٌ وَأَيَّامُكَ إِلاّ عَدَدٌ وَجَمْعُكَ إِلاّ بَدَدٌ يَوْمَ يُنَادِي المُنَادِي:

الظَّالِمِينَ عَلَى اللَّهِ لَعْنَةُ أَلَا ۟ رَبِّهِمْ عَلَى .

فَالحَمْدُ للهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ الَّذِي خَتَمَ لِأَوَّلِنَا بِالسَّعَادَةِ وَالمَغْفِرَةِ وَلِآخِرِنَا بِالشَّهَادَةِ وَالرَّحْمَةِ، وَنَسْأَلُ اللهَ أَنْ يُكْمِلَ لَهُمُ الثَّوَابَ وَيُوجِبَ لَهُمُ المَزِيدَ وَيُحْسِنُ عَلَيْنَا الخِلافَةَ؛ إِنَّهُ رَحِيمٌ وَدُودٌ، وَحَسْبُنَا اللهُ وَنِعْمَ الوَكِيلُ .

So scheme whatever you wish to scheme, and carry out your plots, and intensify your efforts, for by Allah, you shall never be able to obliterate our mention, nor will you ever be able to kill the revelation (that was revealed to us), nor will you ever exalt to attain our position, nor will your shame ever be washed away. Your vision shall prove futile, your days are limited in number, and your wealth will be wasted on the Day when the caller calls out,

أَلَا لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَى الظَّالِمِينَ

"The curse of Allah is upon the oppressors. (***11: 18***)***"***

All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the Worlds, Who sealed the lives of our early ones with happiness and forgiveness, and that of our last ones with martyrdom and mercy. We plead to Allah to complete His rewards for them, grant them an increase, and recompense us pleasingly; He is the most Merciful, the most Compassionate. Allah suffices us, and He is the best Guardian.

Words about the address

This address has been a completion of Imam al-Husayn's uprising and one of the most marvelous revolutionary speeches in Islam. By such sweeping words, Lady Zaynab smashed the despotism of Yazid and inflicted disgrace and dishonor on him and on those who caused him to reach such a position. About this address, Shaykh Muhammad Husayn Kashif al-Ghita says:

"Can the brush of the best painter or the pen of the most eloquent writer depict the reality of Yazid's arrogance, pride, and elation for having the world submissive to him and tasting the pleasure of conquest in a way better and more effective than that depicted by the words of Lady Zaynab in this speech? And can anybody refute all the claims of an opponent in such a way full of expressiveness, substantiation, and even reproach and censure? Moreover, Lady Zaynab, as if all her words of reprimand were not enough, proved before the tyrant and the attendants the inescapable abject end of the wrong and the pleasant final end result of the right. Using a courageous, brave language, she showed Yazid his lowly, mean, ugly, and shameful reality"[10]

Dr. Tawfiq al-Fukayki says:

"Join me to contemplate on this far-reaching speech that contained all arts of rhetoric, styles of oratory, manifestations of expressiveness, significances of enthusiasm, power of allegation, and authority of defense of freedom and belief, in such a forthright way that was sharper than swords. For Yazid, to step on adders' fangs or to be targeted by pointed spears was easier than hearing these words that slapped

his unashamed face in his own house and in the middle of the capital of his illegal, despotic state. Throughout ages, this historical, sweeping speech has been spreading the unparalleled intrepidities, the unwonted courage, and the high ideals of Lady Zaynab. It is finally a never-ending literature that screams in the faces of the tyrants throughout generations."[11]

Contents of the Address

The great speech of Lady Zaynab has been an extension of the uprising of Karbala and a good representation of its values and goals. Let us now refer to some goals that the speech achieved:

● Lady Zaynab referred to the false elation of Yazid who thought of himself as victorious in that encounter. She uncovered the truth that his military superiority was transient and that Almighty Allah let the unbelievers enjoy bliss in this world so that their sins will increase and, thus, they will have a painful chastisement on the Day of Resurrection.

● She reproached Yazid for taking the harem of the Prophet's Household as captives. While it was the Holy Prophet (S) who had freed Yazid and his unbelieving family on the Conquest of Mecca when they were in captivity of the Islamic armies. Instead of thanking the Prophet (S) who saved him from slavery, Yazid rewarded his family very badly.

● She referred to the hereditary, educational, and psychological motives behind Yazid's slaying the Prophet's family. She referred, as an instance, to his grandmother, Hind, who chewed the liver of Hamzah out of her limitless malice against the Prophet and the Hashemites. She also referred to Yazid's grandfather Abu Sufyan who was the leading enemy of Islam and who led campaigns against the Prophet and his Divine Mission. Not forgetting Yazid's father, Lady Zaynab referred to Muawiyah who had slain innocent Muslims and violated all what Allah has deemed respectable.

● She disapproved of Yazid's citing poetic verses in which he wished his forefathers who had been killed at the hands of Imam Ali during their conflicts against the Holy Prophet, as well as the other Muslim warriors, to be witnessing him take revenge upon the Holy Prophet. She also courageously asserted to Yazid that he would certainly face the same fate as those of his cursed forefathers.

● She shed lights on an important point that the tyrant, by slaying Imam al-Husayn and his pure family members and companions, had in fact slain himself, no one else. The souls of the martyrs are pure, alive, abiding, and covered by auras of glory. Disgrace and loss were only for Yazid.

● She mentioned those who had paved the way for Yazid to hold such a position with words of scolding as she added them to Yazid. This point is worthy of careful study.

● She referred to her own high standing and being beyond his reach in honor as another way of making little of the tyrant. Despite all the misfortunes that were inflicted on her and had weakened her, she showed her superior strength by rebuking the tyrant so harshly that he was unable to find any answer.

● She proved that all the endeavors of Yazid to eradicate the eternal mention of the Ahl al-Bayt with good would fail, because they represented the 'right', which would inevitably triumph.

Thus, the days since then have proved that Imam al-Husayn and his party were the victorious, while Yazid and his party have always been the losers. At any rate, the speech of Lady Zaynab includes tons of lessons, not all of which can be contained in this brief study. It is quite enough to say that this speech was a deathblow that destroyed the Umayyad State.

Having seen the collapse of his pride and arrogance, Yazid could not find any words to answer except citing a poetic verse, which was not related to the subject in any extent. Moreover, the political atmospheres were overclouded against him whose perplexity, owing to the scandalous situation that Lady Zaynab put him in, disabled him to do anything. He once tried to find himself excuses for his crime and, at other times, tried to make a comparison between the Imam and himself.

Lady Zaynab and a Syrian Man

A Syrian man who attended the session at Yazid's Court, looked at Lady Fatimah daughter of Imam al-Husayn in captivity and said to Yazid, "Give this girl to me to serve me." As she heard this shocking statement, the lady trembled and grabbed hold of her aunt's cloak.

Lady Zaynab shouted at the Syrian man, "You, the mean one, have deluded. Neither you nor your leader (i.e. Yazid) can do this." This statement enraged Yazid who said, "I could if I wished." Lady Zaynab answered, "No, you cannot do it unless you abandon our religion and take another for yourself." Yazid realized the huge insult that Lady Zaynab hurled at him with these words, so he shouted at her, "How dare you say such words to my face? It was your father and your brother who abandoned the religion!"

Indifferent to the tyrant's authority and ability to punish, Lady Zaynab replied him so confidently saying, "If you really are a Muslim then it is only by the religion of Allah and through my father and grandfather that you and your fathers were guided,."

With these words, Lady Zaynab fully unmasked the tyrant who claimed Imam al-Husayn and his family to be apostates. As a result, people of Syria realized that the captives were from the Holy Prophet's family about whom many Quranic Verses had been revealed from the Almighty Lord, and that Yazid was no more than a faithless liar. "You have lied enemy of Allah!" said Yazid as these were the only words that he could find to answer Lady Zaynab. She replied, "You are a dominant ruler! You can revile (at anybody) unjustly and you can prevail on anyone through your authority."

The tyrant's rage decreased and he had to put his head down. Meanwhile, the Syrian man repeated his request, however Yazid shouted at him, "May Allah inflict a swift death upon you!" Thus, Lady Zaynab was thus able to retrieve her power and self-will, which she had inherited from her forefathers, to face the tyrant and to triumph upon him.

An author says:

"Despite her weakness and state of captivity, Lady Zaynab could achieve the first decisive victory over an authoritative and strong tyrant. More than once, she confuted Yazid and declared before everybody his ignorance and lack of religion because according to Islamic laws, it is not acceptable to regard Muslim women as captives or to be treated as such in wars."[12]

Anyhow, the Syrian man's request seemly served as an opening to long articles of criticism and reproach against Yazid. This was the beginning of the Syrian people's realization of the situation. It seems that the Syrian was not so dull, especially after he had heard the public reply of Lady Zaynab, which showed that Yazid was excluded from Islam if he could affirm in response to the Syrian man's request. This shows that the man only intended to disgrace Yazid.

Moaning for Imam al-Husayn

Ladies of the Prophet's family then asked the tyrant to give them a house in which they would hold consolation ceremonies for Imam al-Husayn since they were unable to show their grief before the guards of Yazid, and if they did, they would receive whips and words of insult. In this regard, Imam Ali Zayn al-Abidin says, "The guards' spears would come down on the head of anyone of us who would shed even a single tear."

Yazid however, had to respond to the Ladies' request. Hence, all of them dressed in black, mourned and moaned for their Imam and the martyrs ceaselessly for seven days.

Back to Medina

Having seen the results of the influential addresses of Imam Zayn al-Abidin and Lady Zaynab, Yazid anticipated a rebel or at least a disorder in the capital of his state. He therefore decided to send the Prophet's family away from Damascus to their hometown, Medina. He gathered them in his palace and poured a lot of money on a silky carpet as blood money for the martyrdom of Imam al-Husayn, his household, and his companions. This situation infuriated the Ladies so terribly that they all spoke out in pain.

Lady Zaynab said, "You are surely shameless and boastful! You kill my brother and family members, and then you want me to accept money as recompense!" Lady Sukaynah said, "I have never seen such hard-heartedness, and I have never seen an infidel and polytheist who is more vicious than you are… etc."

Thus, the tyrant, who had thought that the Ahl al-Bayt could be subdued with offer of money or any other transient material as he did not believe in the revelation that Almighty Allah –***"only desired to keep away the uncleanness from them and to purify them with a*** (***thorough***) ***purifying,"*** (***33:33***) failed to subjugate the Prophet's household.

He then ordered al-Numan ibn Bashir to accompany the Prophet's family to Medina and to take care of them along this journey[13]. He also decided to begin that journey at night so as to avoid any expected disorder or revolt.

Abd al-Malik al-Salami, carrying out the orders of Umar ibn Saad, conveyed the news of Imam al-Husayn's martyrdom to Medina before the captives arrived there.[14] As much as this news delighted the ruler of Medina, it depressed the citizens who could not control themselves and the sound of their cries and weeping overtook the whole city.

Then the ruler of Medina ascended the minbar of the Prophet's Masjid and declared his happiness and satisfaction over the Imam's martyrdom and sufferings of his party. Abdullah ibn al-Saib criticized the ruler, saying, "Had Fatimah been alive, she would have wept for her son."[15] The ruler however, shouted back at him and said meaningless words.[16]

The Hashemites cried and wailed over the martyrdom of their chief. They held ceremonies to mourn that occasion. Abdullah ibn Jafar, Lady Zaynab's husband, held obsequies attended by groups of people to console him for the misfortune.

Yazid then sent the head of Imam al-Husayn to Medina so as to spread horror and fear among its people. The ruler of Medina denied this deed, while Marwan ibn al-Hakam welcomed and showed his malice against the Prophet and his religion. As he looked in the face of the Imam, he remembered his forefathers who were killed at the hands of the Imam's father and grandfather. He then turned his eyes towards the Holy Prophet's tomb and said, "Muhammad, this is for that day of (the battle of) Badr."[17]

On their way to Medina, the captives of the Ahl al-Bayt asked the guards who accompanied them to take them through a way that led to Karbala, and they did. Once they arrived in there, the ladies fell upon the tomb of Imam al-Husayn with cries and wails. They spent three days there during which their tears flowed continually. Imam Zayn al-Abidin feared for the lives of his aunt and the other ladies, worrying that they might die out of their excessive grief. So he ordered to ready themselves for travelling to Medina. They left Karbala with tearful eyes and hoarse voices.

Medina was at that time dressed in black because of the death of Lady Ummu Salamah, the Prophet's widow, who died a month after Imam al-Husayn's martyrdom overtaken by her grief for him.[18] When the caravan was only a few miles away Medina, Imam Zayn al-Abidin halted there for a while. He asked Bishr ibn Hidhlim if he could precede the caravan in entering the city and recite poetry to express and declare the martyrdom of Imam al-Husayn through some poetic verses. This man then entered the city and stopped near the Prophet's Masjid to declare the martyrdom of the Imam, in a sad tone.

The public hurried towards him for more information about the fate of the others. Bishr told them about the captivity of Imam Zayn al-Abidin and the other Ladies of the Prophet's household. They then, while crying and weeping, hurried to the suburbs to receive the caravan. As soon as the Prophet's household arrived, people surrounded them with tear-filled eyes, and that day was similar to the day when the Holy

Prophet died.

Amidst of that mournful gathering, Imam Zayn al-Abidin delivered a speech in which he touched on his father and the misfortunes that they had suffered. He, accompanied by his aunt and sisters and surrounded by people, then headed towards the Prophet's Masjid. Lady Zaynab held to the frames of the Masjid's gate and cried out, "O Grandfather! I am conveying to you the news of my brother al-Husayn's martyrdom."[19]

From that day onwards, Lady Zaynab's one and only occupation was weeping for her martyred family and friends and to work relentlessly so that the message of sacrifices of Imam al-Husayn was spread endlessly. She wept whenever her gaze fell on her nephew, Imam Zayn al-Abidin. This way of life continued for her till she became lifeless like a dead body.[20]

1. See Muhammad Baqir al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 45, p. 114.
2. See Wafiyyat al-Aimmah, 453.
3. Parasang is a unit of length, usually reckoned as equal to between 3 and 3.5 miles or 5 to 5.5 km.
4. See Ibn al-Athir, al-Tarikh, vol. 3, p. 398.
5. See Shaykh al-Mufid, al-Irshad, p. 276.
6. This is an indication to the Battle of Badr during which the relatives of Yazid were killed at the hands of al-Husayn's father and relatives.
7. The Khazraj is the tribe who supported the Prophet and his partisans.
8. This is clear-cut evidence on Yazid's disbelief in Islam and the Divine Mission of Prophet Muhammad.
9. Ahmad is the heavenly name of Prophet Muhammad (S).
10. Muhammad Husayn Kashif al-Ghita', al-Siyasah al-Husayniyyah, 30
11. Baqir Sharif al-Qarashi, Hayat al-Imam al-Husayn, 3:381.
12. See Baqir Sharif al-Qarashi's Hayat al-Imam al-Hasan; 3:390.
13. See Ibn al-Athir, al-Tarikh, vol. 3, p. 300
14. This report is quoted from Baqir Sharif al-Qarasahi's book entitled al-Sayyidah Zaynab. Nevertheless, this report may contradict others.
15. Imam Ali (a) narrated that the Holy Prophet (S) once said, "On the Resurrection Day, my daughter Fatimah shall come with dresses painted with her son's blood in her hand. She shall hang to one of the pillars of the (Divine) Throne and say, 'O the All Just! Judge between my son's killer and me.' The Lord then will judge for my daughter. I swear it by the Lord of the Paradise." See al-Sirat al-Sawi fi Manaqib(i) aale al-Nabi, 93
16. See Abd al-Razzaq al-Muqarram, Maqtal al-Husayn, 417
17. See Ibn Abil-Hadid's Sharh(u) Nahj al-Balaghah; 4:72
18. See Sayyid Ibn Tawus al-Hasani, al-Lahuf fi Qatla al-Tufuf, p. 116
19. See Abd al-Razzaq al-Muqarram, Maqtal al-Husayn, 472
20. See Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Tabari Tarikh al-Umam wa al-Muluk; 6:366, and Ibn al-Athir, al- Tarikh, vol. 3, p.428

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